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Letter dated 18 September 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

We have the honour to forward to you the joint statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey on the international meeting on Syria held in Astana on14 and 15 September 2017.

We should be grateful if you would circulate the letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council (see annex).

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran

(*Signed*) Vassily **Nebenzia**
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative of Turkey

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Annex to the letter dated 18 September 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Joint statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey on the international meeting on Syria in Astana, 14-15 September 2017

Astana, 15 September 2017

The Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey as guarantors of the observance of the ceasefire regime in the Syrian Arab Republic (hereinafter referred to as "Guarantors"):

- Reaffirming their strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic;
- Guided by the provisions of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015);
- Welcoming the significant reduction of violence on the ground in Syria as a result of measures aimed at maintaining and strengthening the ceasefire regime;

1. Express their satisfaction with the progress in implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic of 4 May 2017.

2. Announce the creation of the de-escalation areas according to the memorandum of 4 May 2017 in eastern Ghouta, in certain parts in the north of Homs province, in Idlib province and certain parts of the neighbouring provinces (Latakia, Hama and Aleppo provinces) and also in certain parts of southern Syria (based on the Russian Federation initiative as a Guarantor of the Astana process, with the aim to ensure the ceasefire regime and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and continue fight against terrorism).

3. Emphasize again that the creation of the de-escalation areas and security zones is a temporary measure, the duration of which will initially be six months and will be automatically extended on the basis of consensus of the Guarantors.

4. Emphasize that under no circumstances the creation of the above-mentioned de-escalation areas undermine the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic.

5. Allocate the de-escalation control forces of the three Guarantors on the basis of the maps agreed upon in Ankara on 8 September 2017 and in accordance with the terms of reference for deployment of de-escalation control forces prepared by the Joint Working Group on de-escalation on a temporary basis in the security zone in the de-escalation area in Idlib province and certain parts of the neighbouring provinces (Latakia, Hama and Aleppo provinces) with the aim to prevent incidents and clashes between the conflicting parties (the government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the armed opposition groups that have joined and will join the ceasefire regime).

6. Form a joint Iranian-Russian-Turkish coordination centre aimed at coordinating activities of de-escalation control forces in the de-escalation areas.

7. Emphasize progress in the fight against terrorism and elimination of Daesh/ISIL, Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

associated with Al-Qaeda or Daesh/ISIL as a result of the launch of the above-mentioned de-escalation areas and reaffirm their determination to take all necessary measures to continue the fight against them within and outside the de-escalation areas.

9. Emphasize the need for the conflicting parties to take confidence-building measures, including the release of detainees/abductees and the handover of the bodies as well as identification of missing persons, to create better conditions for the political process and a lasting ceasefire.

9. Underscore the need to make use of the de-escalation areas for rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and recall, in this regard, the relevant provisions of the memorandum of 4 May 2017.

10. Call upon the observers of the Astana process and other interested members of the international community to support the process of de-escalation and stabilization in Syria, inter alia, by sending additional aid to the Syrian people, facilitating the humanitarian mine action, preserving historical heritage, restoring basic infrastructure assets, including social and economic facilities.

11. Call upon the conflicting parties, representatives of the Syrian opposition and civil society to use emerging favourable conditions to step up efforts to give impetus to the intra-Syrian dialogue and advance the United Nations-led political process in Geneva as well as other initiatives, and to do so on an urgent basis.

12. Reaffirm their determination to continue implementing the provisions of the memorandum of 4 May 2017 and other decisions adopted earlier within the framework of the Astana process.

13. Express their sincere gratitude to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Nursultan Nazarbayev and the Kazakh authorities for hosting in Astana the sixth high-level international meeting on Syria.

14. Decide to hold the next high-level international meeting on Syria in Astana at the end of October 2017.